A Whistleblower Case

Science is built on checks and balances. Why would someone be punished for shedding light on the dangers of a chemical compound? There are certain laws in place to protect whistleblowers from retaliation. Retaliation can come in several different forms when someone steps forward to report scientific misconduct. Sometimes these laws work and whistleblowers come forward with enough force to spur a change in course that could save lives. Other times they do not.

Whistleblowers in Science

There are protections under the law in place to prevent that whistleblower from being on the receiving end of any punishment for stepping forward. Sometimes these laws work and whistleblowers come forward with enough force to spur a change in course that could save lives. Other times they do not.

Dr. Deborah Rice had studied deca, a chemical compound, from the public health point of view. Her job as a member of the EPA Environmental Health Advisory Committee was to give scientific advice on environmental health issues. She gave an educated warning on the dangers of the chemical compound, and got the attention of the agency. She resigned in 1998 after 20 years of service, Lappa filed a lawsuit saying the lab retaliated against him for his whistleblowing. The lab settled with Lappa for $250,000.

Whistleblowers in Science

A whistleblower is a person that turns to the appropriate authority to report scientific misconduct. Often when a person steps forward to report scientific misconduct the tables are turned, and the accused institutes a lawsuit for slander. This is maybe the only defense that the accused institutes a lawsuit for slander. This is maybe the only defense that the accused may try to defend their position by accusing the whistleblower of making up the facts. Sometimes these laws work and whistleblowers come forward with enough force to spur a change in course that could save lives. Other times they do not.

Whistleblowers in Science

In each of these examples the whistleblower was protecting the well being of the public from a potential harmful practice, or...